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Process and impact evaluation of the VERB Summer Scorecard Program

by

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A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major: Kinesiology (Behavioral Basis of Physical Activity)

Program of Study Committee:
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Ames, Iowa

2008

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Chapter 1: General Introduction

Introduction

Inactivity at any age can cause many current and future health problems. There is currently a considerable public health concern about levels of inactivity in youth. A survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicated that 61.5% of children aged 9-13 do not participate in any organized physical activity while 22.6% of youth do no physical activity at all (U.S. Department..., 2000). This type of information has led to many state and national initiatives aimed at promoting physical activity (U.S. Department..., 2000).

Community-based physical activity programs have been highlighted by the Community Guide for Preventive Services as one of the most promising strategies for promoting physical activity (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 1995). A unique advantage of community-based programs is that they can be developed to take into account the unique interests of the population and the unique characteristics of the setting. In 2006, the Story County Healthy Lifestyles Task Force (SCHLT) piloted a county-wide physical activity program called the VERB Summer Scorecard program to help increase the physical activity levels in youth¹. In the Scorecard program, youth ages 9-13 (referred to as tweens) were provided with a scorecard that highlighted activity opportunities and events in the area. By participating in VERB sponsored events and completing a scorecard, the youth were able to earn incentives and qualify for grand prize drawings. Preliminary evidence from the past campaign in 2006 had demonstrated continued interest in the program. Approximately 95 %

¹ VERB is a national social marketing campaign conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that encourages youth to be more active. The VERB campaign encourages communities to capitalize on the name recognition by building local programs to provide physical activity for youth

of youth that participated last year indicated an interest in participating if the program was available again. To capitalize on this interest, a team from the Department of Health and Human Performance at Iowa State University partnered with the SCHLT to deliver a broader and more comprehensive program in the summer of 2007. This program involved more community and campus partners and sponsors providing Story County youth with a broader array of activity opportunities.

A key challenge in community-based research is to fully evaluate the effectiveness of programming. The distributed nature of the intervention and the difficulty of tracking participation rates are just two of the specific challenges in this type of evaluation. The present study was designed to provide a comprehensive program evaluation of the 2007 VERB program. This information can assist public health researchers (and the SCHLT) in planning more effective community programs.

Study Purpose

The purpose of the study was to determine factors that influence interest and involvement in the VERB summer scorecard program. Consideration was given to factors that influenced initial enrollment, factors that influence motivation during the program as well as factors that influence successful completion (defined as turning in a completed scorecard). This information will provide insight into planning future community physical activity programs and help to understand factors influencing activity behaviors in youth. To accomplish this objective, information on participation in VERB events was documented and geographical data was obtained to calculate distance from each community location and its affect. Parents of children who were registered for the VERB Summer Scorecard Program were also surveyed after the VERB advertising and activities had taken place. The survey

evaluated the overall impact of the program, but also helped to answer important questions about youth and parental involvement in the community.

The specific aims of the study were as follows:

1. To determine factors influencing participation rates and involvement in the program.

I hypothesized that there will be higher involvement by younger youth and greater involvement by Ames residents compared to other communities. The hypothesis is based on past VERB results (2006 Verb Survey) and trends in activity patterns.

2. To determine the role of parent involvement on successful completion of the VERB Summer Scorecard Program.

I hypothesize that parent involvement will have an important influence on involvement in the program. Specifically, I expect that youth will be more likely to complete a scorecard if their parents are actively involved. This hypothesis is based on possible differences in parent demographics and community resources/support, as well as home placement compared to VERB activities.

There are many benefits to researching and assessing the methods used in the VERB Summer Scorecard program. Surveying the parents who have had children involved in the program provided insight into the determinants of participation and also provides information about how parents influence youth physical activity involvement. Overall, the proposed evaluation also helped to determine the factors needed to develop and maintain comprehensive community-based programs focused on healthy lifestyles. The evaluation will have direct benefits for Story County and the Story County Healthy Lifestyles Task Force. By tracking participation and involvement it is now possible to provide practical suggestions that can improve the program in future years.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The Verb Summer Scorecard Program is designed to provide youth in Story County with increased opportunities to be active and to provide motivation and incentives to reward participation. This section will provide a background on physical activity in youth and describe challenges and limitations associated with conducting and evaluating large scale community programs. Specifically, the first focus will be on youth activity patterns and correlates, going into the current inactivity levels as well as determinants and possible peer and parental impacts on physical activity. The subsequent section will then focus on certain interventions on youth activity. This discussion will include lessons learned from past research on mass media social marketing campaigns and the research that has been done on the VERB campaign.

Inactivity Levels in Youth

Inactivity and unhealthy decision making have been associated with obesity and many health risks including cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes (Centers..., 2004). The National Health and Examination Survey has shown that the prevalence of obesity has increased from 6 to 10.7% for ages 6 to 11 from 1976 to 1991 (Troost, Kerr, Ward, & Pate, 2001). Type 2 diabetes, which has been a disease traditionally restricted for adults, has also started to be reported in children.

Inactivity and obesity present significant problems during childhood but the broader public health concern has focused on implications later in life. Children who are obese and inactive as a child are more at risk to adult obesity (Troost, Kerr, Ward, & Pate, 2001). They are also more likely than non-obese children to have hyperlipidemia, hypertension, glucose

intolerance, or orthopedic complications as they age (Trost, Kerr, Ward, & Pate, 2001). The social issues that may arise in obese and inactive children also seem to have long lasting effects on self-esteem, body image, and economic mobility (Trost, Kerr, Ward, & Pate, 2001). The greatest risk of inactivity though, is that obese and inactive people increase the chance of premature mortality, causing 1.9 million deaths a year (Cavill & Bauman, 2003). To address these problems many agencies and public health groups have made physical activity promotion in youth a high priority.

Physical Activity Guidelines for Youth – Are Children Meeting the Recommendations?

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) has developed guidelines for children's physical activity. The document includes four guidelines that reflect the recommended types and amounts of physical activity for children:

- “Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes, and up to several hours, of age appropriate physical activity on all, or most days of the week.”
- “Children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day.”
- “Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, fitness and performance benefits.”
- “Extended periods (periods of two hours or more) of inactivity are discouraged for children, especially during the daytime hours.” (National Association..., 2004)

There are many signs that youth in the United States are not being as active as they should be. According to research from the CDC's Youth Media Campaign Longitudinal

Survey on 9 to 13 year olds in 2002, 61.5% of children in this age group do not participate in any organized physical activity when they are not in a school setting (Center for..., 2003).

This same research showed that 22.6% of children do not participate in any free-time physical activity at all (Center for..., 2003).

Physical Activity Promotion Strategies

Along with the goals and objectives, the CDC is using social marketing strategies with “a goal to increase and maintain physical activity” (Wong et al., 2004). There are programs to increase both adult and youth physical activity, but the main focus in youth has been a program called VERB, a \$125 million dollar program that attempts to apply “...sophisticated commercial marketing techniques to address the public health problem of sedentary lifestyles...” and “....change children’s health behaviors” (Wong et al., 2004).

Influences on Physical Activity in Youth

While there seems to be much investigation on what kind of outside influences may hinder or be the basis for physical activity, much more is needed. The influences that have been investigated though seem to fit into these categories: physiological/developmental, environmental, and psychological/social/demographic (Kohl & Hobbs, 1998). Brustad (1993) developed a model which stated that the greatest influences of children’s physical activity attraction are parental physical activity orientations, parental encouragement levels, children’s gender, and children’s perceived physical competence. As Anderssen and Wold (1992) have concluded, perhaps the most influential of all and one which cannot possibly be categorized into one of the above is the influence that the parent plays in a child’s physical activity.

While much study has been done on how parent involvement affects physical activity, there are unanswered questions regarding the mechanisms through which parents influence children's activity. Some of this confusion stems from the fact that parents can influence children's activity both directly and indirectly. There is also a vast array of potentially important family variables including family structure, socioeconomic status, and ethnic heritage, parenting style etc... (Sallis et al, 1992). Some of the more typically cited mechanisms of parental influence are as follows: through physiological genetic factors, the act of modeling, by rewarding desirable behaviors and punishing those behaviors that are not, through the establishment of barriers to limit, by providing resources to perform the behavior, or by employing procedures to help the development of the child's self control (Trost et al, 2003). While it is true that children acquire much from their parents customs, genetics may play a bigger role in the propensity to be active than has been thought (Perusse, Tremblay, Leblanc, & Bouchard, 1989)

A common finding in the literature is that active parents tend to have active children but the mechanism behind this type of "familial aggregation" of lifestyles is not clear. Studies such as one by Moore et al. (1991) have concluded that children of active parents are 5.8 times more likely to be active than peers with inactive parents. Freedson and Evenson (1991) also agreed with this, finding that children who were inactive also had inactive parents nearly 70% of the time. It has generally been assumed that this effect is likely due to role modeling but research by a number of investigators (Kimiecik and Horn, 1998; Sallis et al., 1992, Trost, 2003; Welk, 2003) contend that other family factors have a stronger influence. The factors of parental involvement, parental facilitation and parental encouragement have been shown to be particularly important (Welk, 2003).

No matter the activity level, support plays a major role and has been researched often. One finding by Trost (2003) found that parents who more actively value the outcomes (e.g. reduced health risk) that are associated with physical activity will provide support for their children to do it as well. Kimiecik and Horn (1998) agreed with this statement that parental beliefs are important, especially perceptions of competence and task orientation. On the other hand, there has been evidence suggesting that how a child perceives their parents beliefs has nothing to do with their moderate to vigorous physical activity levels (Kimiecik, Horn, & Shurin, 1996).

Who does play the greatest role in the parent relationship though? Some research tends to suggest that mothers play the greatest role in the family of influencing level of activity. A study by Moore et al. (1991) provided information that children of active mothers were 2.0 times more likely to be active than those children whose mothers were not active. Age of the mother seems to be important though, as Wong et al. (2004) found that one of the main influences on physical activity of youth are mothers in the age range of 29 and 46.

Other research suggests that fathers are in fact more powerful than mothers in predicting activity level. A 12-year follow up study of 9 to 15 year olds done in 1996 showed that fathers' physical activity in 1980 was related to their children's habitual physical activity in the same year. There was significant prediction of physical activity values twelve years later when the starting point was age of 9 (Yang, Telama, & Laakso, 1996).

While much of the research focuses on simple parental influence, Brustad (1996) found many differences between boys and girls. For both sexes, the biggest predictor of physical activity is actually, and not surprisingly, enjoyment of the activity (DiLorenzo, 1998). Maybe somewhat surprising, there has been no amount of difference estimated in the

amount of play time that the parents have with either boys or girls (Sallis et al., 1992). Boys had the greatest effect due to perceived parental encouragement and perceived parental enjoyment (Brustad, 1996). In this case, boys will be attracted to the activity because they like the game or sport, perceive it to be fun, and have a sense of perceived competence (Brustad, 1996). Parental support also comes in the way of transportation to activities and boys seem to receive more encouragement for physical activity and are more frequently transported to these events than girls. Overall, while Trost et al (1999) found that self-efficacy, social norms, and community organization involvement may be the greatest predictors of level of boys physical activity, DiLorenzo (1998) added that exercise knowledge and interest in sports media was also important.

For girls, perceived parental enjoyment and higher levels of encouragement by parents were associated with liking physical activity more (Brustad, 1996). Girls more so are concerned with peer outcomes, a greater liking of the sport, and a higher perceived competence, with self-efficacy being the only real predictor of physical activity (Trost et al, 1999). These differences may account for the fact that boys have been found to be more active than girls (Prochaska, Rodgers, & Sallis, 2002).

Not only sex, but age can also play a key role in predicting physical activity level. Over time, age influences what kind of parental support is needed. One example of this is that while younger children may be influenced for physical activity, parents' physical activity levels have been shown to positively influence sport participation in older children (Yang, Telama, & Laasko, 1996).

Finally, results from McMurray et al. (1993) conclude that other factors than parental variables are more influential to activity levels. Many other correlates have been shown to be

salient. Some of the greatest predictors are the child's perceived level of competence and if they endorse a task or ego orientation (Kimiecik, Horn, & Shurin, 1996). Peer support also has been correlated to be a strong predictor to physical activity (Prochaska, Rodgers, & Sallis, 2002).

While there are so many influences that can affect a child's activity, the best way to facilitate it is for the child to receive support and be in organized rather than non-organized activities (Sallis et al., 1992). Simple activities are not as effective and there is little evidence that simply playing with children will get them more interested (Sallis et al., 1992). Child adolescent community physical activity programs need to involve and market towards parents in order to have a greater effect on child activity levels. More research and understanding of the exact factors in the future will help community mass media campaigns in this regard.

Mass Media Social Marketing Campaigns

While social marketing is a common strategy to influence attitudes and perceptions, the specific use of social marketing campaigns is relatively new in the physical activity field. The CDC has found community wide intervention campaigns such as the VERB campaign to be effective on many levels. After reviewing ten different cases that employed a large scale, intense, and visible message through a variety of different media sources in a community, each were found to be effective on increasing various measures of physical activity levels in both rural and urban settings. The campaigns showed a median result of a 5% increase in the physically active and a 16% increase in energy expenditure. There was also information that leads to the belief that these campaigns strengthened the cohesiveness of a community. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 1995)

Although found to be effective, community wide mass media campaigns are very difficult to execute with the number of different influences and messages that are competing in the media (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004). To reach large segments of the population, campaigns target the population through a variety of different sources and communication channels (Cavill & Bauman, 2003). According to experts in the field, marketing campaigns can play four roles in promoting health behavior change: an educator to introduce new ideas, a supporter to reinforce old messages or maintain change, a promoter to attract attention to existing programs, and a supplement to community-based interventions (Owen et al., 1995). Changing behavior through a campaign is clearly difficult due to the number of social and cultural factors that interact to reinforce the behaviors. Campaigns, such as the VERB campaign, have to do much more than capture attention to increase physical activity though. Campaigns must specifically change the social norm for activity and break down barriers in order to create meaningful behavior change. This is particularly difficult since behaviors like physical activity are typically deeply rooted and influenced by a variety of social and environmental factors (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004). A specific need with youth programming is to target parents since they serve a “gatekeeper” role in determining children’s access to and involvement in physical activity. (Troost, 2003).

To change behavior, mass media campaigns follow two different models when conceptualizing media-based interventions: the social marketing model and the transtheoretical model (Marcus et al., 1998). In both models, communication takes the form of mass-reach broadcast media campaigns, print-based materials, audiovisual materials, and newer multimedia initiatives (Marcus et al., 1998).

Much can be learned from past health promotion campaigns. After reviewing 15 such physical activity campaigns, Bauman and Cavill (2003) found that in these campaigns, an average of 70% of the target group became aware of the campaign. At the same time, half of the campaigns reported that there was an increase in knowledge or attitudes towards physical activity (Cavill & Bauman, 2003).

A media campaign by the National Heart Foundation of Australia in 1990 was conceptually similar to the VERB campaign in the United States. The foundation aimed “television advertising, professional education activities and interviews, promotional materials and community events” at all citizens in hope of increasing the “knowledge of the preventative role of physical activity and to encourage the sedentary to start walking.” (Booth, Bauman, Oldenburg, Owen, & Magnus, 1992) The results of this were encouraging. While there was no change afterwards in knowledge of benefits, there was an increase in the times per two week period that a person reported walking (Booth, Bauman, Oldenburg, Owen, & Magnus, 1992). This was shown to be equally effective for both men and women. Information is promising especially for the VERB campaign. Studies such as these are not generalizable though simply due to the fact that there is a lack of validity statistics in the review (Dzewaltowski, Estabrooks, Klesges, Bull, & Glasgow, 2004).

Past campaigns can provide some information to help program planners but it is difficult to isolate the essential factors (or best practices) that characterize successful campaigns. It is likely that there are many different facets that can make a difference but might not work in every situation. The most important part of the campaign is the message being portrayed. The message must be something different that can be differentiated from other messages (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004). We see examples of the message being lost

such as the message by the National Heart Foundation, who had a very high message awareness level, but there was some speculation that participants were mixing the 'exercise in the media' message up with a Meat Marketing Board message which portrayed butchers taking aerobics classes (Booth, Bauman, Oldenburg, Owen, & Magnus, 1992).

The messages must have the right channel of communication. Marcus et al. (1998) found that the greatest intervention that affects changing behavior in the short term was using print and/or telephone advertising. Campaigns must also have a clear and consistent focus. Experts suggest that campaigns target specific segments of the population with multiple advertisements to increase the likelihood of reaching the target market (Marcus et al., 1998). Different messages must redefine and frame the issue to make it salient and relevant to diverse interests and views within a population (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004).

The key problem for many campaigns is that they are unable to reach socially disadvantaged groups who have little new technology to access the information. Those who are lower income, less educated, or older are often the people who need the message the most. Campaigns cannot simply use technology as the channel for their message, but instead have to use multifaceted approaches that utilize print, radio, television, health screenings, and community events in order for success to take place. While this population is also one that may not go to the expense of a doctor appointment, media approaches must reach the less fortunate in a way that is less costly and less invasive as talking to a physician. Studies have done things such as change languages or use supplemental personal contact, but no real answer is yet understood as to what type of intervention will most likely lead to success with these populations. (Marcus et al., 1998)

There is evidence that serial mass media campaigns like the VERB campaign do not have the same affects that first time mass media campaigns do. According to a study done by Owen et al. (1995) on the National Heart Foundation Campaign, there was a significant difference in awareness of the message both after first year and the second year. The study found that while there were changes in activity levels through the first year, the message became redundant and there were no differences in the second year (Owen et al., 1995). This means that the same message cannot be displayed each year in order for action to be taken. There must be differences each year.

Overall, while there may not be one way to advertise a social marketing campaign, it is important to keep the tenants of social marketing theory in mind. Defining the audience and adapting the message to it is key. Campaigns should make sure “the right product is available at the right price, in the right place and is well promoted” (Cavill & Bauman, 2004).

Past Verb Research

VERB is a relatively new social marketing campaign. It received Congressional approval and aid beginning in 2001 and was launched in June of 2002. The marketing was done in a very systematic way as documented in two papers on the effectiveness of the program in creating better awareness of physical activity behaviors (Centers..., 2004). With many mass media tools being utilized, including general market and ethnic-specific advertising on the radio or television, or through community, school, or internet promotions, these sort of studies are important in order to know what is working and what needs to be changed in the advertising (Huhman et al., 2007).

An original study was done by random-digit-dialing nationally of 3120 parents and children with the first calls being conducted before the launch of VERB from April to June of 2002 (Huhman et al., 2005). After paid advertising ran nationally for one year, the sample was again reached to survey if they were aware of the VERB campaign and what influence it may have had on their physical activity level. Out of the sample, 74% of the children ended up being aware of the VERB campaign, exceeding campaign goals of 50% awareness (Huhman et al., 2005). The survey also showed that the VERB marketing campaign had a very positive effect on the free-time activity levels of children aged 9 to 13 (Huhman et al., 2005). Increasingly though, it seemed that the more awareness that the children had of VERB, the more they participated in free-time physical activity (Huhman et al., 2005). Of 9 to 10 year olds, those who knew of VERB participated in free-time physical activity 34% more often, which accounted for about 1.1 more sessions per week (Huhman et al., 2005). Overall though, the message seemed to be what attracted these younger children in this first year with the campaign slogan of “physical activity is fun”, focusing on social awareness and friendships (Huhman et al., 2005). Older children though, who were not reached as easily, would have been better reached by notions of mastery, peer acceptance, and competition (Huhman et al., 2005). There is also evidence that those VERB participants who were low socioeconomically were influenced because the advertisements showed real life situations (Huhman et al., 2005).

A second study was done just a year later on the VERB campaign finding similar positive results about the influence of the campaign. In research done on serial mass media campaigns though, Owen et al. (1995) suggest that campaigns that are done year after year without changing a message can become redundant and not acquire the same awareness of

message or behavior change that the original campaign did. After the second year though, VERB scores seemed to prove this wrong, with considerably stronger results than the first study and a larger population knowing about VERB instead of the previous younger population (Huhman et al., 2007). 81% of children in the population were now aware of the VERB campaign and this increased their activity level by about one session per week (Huhman et al., 2007). A dose response was also reported being that the more children reported seeing the VERB message, the more positive their attitudes became about VERB (Huhman et al., 2007).

While campaigns had been done in many other countries, this is the first study of its kind on community physical activity campaigns for children in the United States. These results are very promising and show that children in the United States can be active if given the right motivation and tools. This research proved no causal relationship to increasing physical activity, but it does show that knowledge of such campaigns do help to increase physical activity in youth.

Chapter 3: Methods

Description of the Target Population

The target population for the VERB Summer Scorecard Program was approximately 3800 children who are aged 8 to 13 living in Story County. Story County is the 9th largest county in Iowa with a population of 79,981 according to the 2000 US Census. It includes the city of Ames which has a population 50,731, as well as a number of smaller communities including Huxley, Nevada, Slater, and Story City. A total of 15 communities make up the county. A predominately Caucasian area, white persons make up 91.2% of the population in Story County, while Asian persons make up 5.6%, black persons make up 1.9%, and Hispanic or Latino persons make up 1.8%. (US Census Bureau, 2008)

The income levels tend to be relatively high compared to other counties in the state of Iowa. Much of this difference is due to Ames being the home of Iowa State University and the businesses in the area that interact with the university. The average percent of children that qualify for free and reduced lunch in Ames was 21.2% during the 2006-2007 school year. Other communities such as Nevada (26.5%) have similar or even lower percentages. These values are lower than the state average of 32.2% (Iowa Department of Education, 2007).

While the VERB Summer Scorecard program was available to all Story County residents, emphasis was placed on the youth in Ames. This was necessary due to logistical constraints but also because Ames represents the highest density of youth in the county.

Description of the VERB Summer Scorecard Program

The VERB Summer Scorecard Program is a community-based physical activity intervention that is designed to increase children's interest and involvement in physical

activity. The program adopts a social-ecological perspective by seeking to influence behavior at multiple levels (e.g. individual, interpersonal factors, organizational, and community-level factors). Children are directly targeted in the program but parents are viewed as a key enabling factor since they determine what programs and activities children participate in. Organizational partners include community activity providers (Park and Recreation programs, youth sport programs, scouting program and other community programming) and companies sponsoring youth related activities. At the community level, social marketing and street-marketing were used to generate interest and to cultivate a social norm for physical activity among youth in the community.

The VERB Summer Scorecard is the main element of the campaign. The scorecard is viewed as the “*Passport to Fun*” for youth since it provides youth with many opportunities to be active and have fun during the summer. Children carry the card with them and get it stamped or validated by participating in physical activity. Parents can initial some of the squares but full completion of the program requires that children also have the card validated at VERB community events or by various community partners that have agreed to co-promote the VERB program. When a scorecard is completely filled with stickers (or initialed), the child returns the card at a community-dropoff location to receive initial small prizes and to have their name entered into a raffle to win prizes such as bikes, sports equipment or activity passes. The scorecard also provides youth with special deals and promotions. Children can use the scorecard to get discounts when participating in golf, swimming, bowling, and other activities in a section called ‘Cool Deals’. Special events allow youth to participate in community programs for free (e.g. free fun run). The VERB sponsored activities are listed on the card and posted on the website. Parents also received

emails throughout the summer to remind them of upcoming events while direct and indirect marketing was also done to promote events during the summer (see promotion section).

The overall concept behind the campaign is shown in Appendix A on page 64. This logic model shows how the various elements of the campaign fit together to influence youth physical activity patterns. Inputs into the program include the VERB Planning Team as well as the VERB sponsors, partners, and the Story County Healthy Lifestyle Taskforce. The main concepts in the program are to increase opportunities for youth to be active (Cool Deals and Fun Events), to reward youth for being active (prizes and incentives) and to change the social norms for being active. By building interest and awareness among parents, we also hope to create a home environment that is more supportive and conducive to physical activity. Collectively, these components are intended to increase children's attraction to physical activity and their perceptions of competence subsequently helping them to adopt and maintain a more active lifestyle.

Coordination and Promotion of the Program

The program in 2007 was sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Performance at Iowa State University and was run in partnership with the Story County Healthy Lifestyle Taskforce – a community health coalition that serves Story County. The program operates by building mutually beneficial partnerships with local companies, agencies and activity providers. Activity providers and agencies benefited by the increased interest and involvement in their programs; businesses and sponsors benefited from increased visibility and positive public relations opportunities; and families and youth benefited by having more opportunities and inherent rewards to motivate behavior. A student-led

committee (The VERB Planning Team) worked to coordinate the overall program. They handled promotions, advertisements, registrations, and maintained communication and correspondence with all the sponsors, agencies, and youth involved in the program. The coordination process started in October and lead all the way up to the implementation of the program on June 2 with weekly meetings. Throughout the summer, the Planning Team continually sought to promote the program. Details describing the coordination and promotion of the program are described in the sections below.

Distribution of the Scorecards

The scorecards were passed out to all students in grades 2 through 8 in Story County, Iowa at the beginning of May with a letter for parents to explain the program. This information was given to them at school for them to take home. Youth were encouraged to return forms to school and/or register online through the VERB Summer Scorecard website (www.storycountyVERB.org). By registering, the VERB staff was provided with contact information which enabled the facilitation of communication through email. This also allowed for tracking throughout the summer. To encourage active registration in the program, all youth returning forms or registering online were offered a free T-shirt and VERB enrollment package with a summer calendar. A total of 414 children registered throughout the summer. Even though cards could still be turned in if the youth had not registered, only registered participants were eligible for prize drawings. This was done in order to encourage registration on the website and to promote more direct parent involvement.

Scorecards were also actively distributed throughout the summer to ensure visibility and access. They were distributed at all VERB Events and available to anyone at all Cool

Deal Locations including the Ames/ISU Ice Arena, Carr Pool, Cardinal Gymnastics, 20th Century Bowling, and Lin-Mar Mini-Golf and Batting Cages. This also helped to make sure the program was visible to home schooled youth who may not have received a scorecard at school. Scorecards were also available at other locations throughout Story Country: Park and Recreation Offices, Ames Library, JAX Outdoor Gear, Bike Word, and Skunk River Cycles. Parents or youth could also download scorecards (pdf) and extra cards were also distributed throughout the summer and at the 4th of July Parade in order to catch children who may have not gotten cards already.

Social Marketing

Mass media campaigns rely on multiple channels of promotion and advertisement to bring across the message (Cavill & Bauman, 2003). The VERB Summer Scorecard program is no different and plans were made at the beginning of the VERB program to implement three techniques of a mass media campaign: newspaper, television, and radio advertisements. The past social marketing conducted by the CDC has created an effective “brand” that is valued and recognized by youth so the major emphasis was to provide a local flavor and let kids know that a VERB program is available locally (Huhman et al., 2005). Advertising kicked off with VERB bags being handed out at a local VEISHA parade to advertise information about the program and that it would begin on June 2. The VEISHA parade was in April and marked the coming of VERB in the summer. Banners were posted in schools containing grades 2 through 8 in the county starting in May. Posters were then distributed to community sponsors and businesses so that youth and parents would be reminded of the program with visible signs of the VERB program all throughout the county. A full color newspaper advertisement was placed in the Ames newspaper for three days during the

summer to advertise VERB and the upcoming VERB Midnight Madness Run. The focus of this advertisement took place in the middle of June and served to both advertise for this event and also generate new VERB participants who may have been unaware what was going on before. Starting in the middle of July, a thirty second radio advertisement played on KASI, a local area FM radio station that broadcasts throughout Story County, and the same advertisement broadcasted as a television advertisement on the local cable channel. This local cable access television channel ran the VERB advertisement in 30 minute loops three times a week until the end of the program. These advertisements were only produced in July and served for the last month of the campaign to bolster the VERB identity and stimulate interest for those who may not have heard of it before. The advertisements will be used in subsequent years. Due to their short play, these media types may not have had as high of an influence on the program as wanted, but will be used in future years for that purpose. Both advertisements were recorded using a Story County specific script. They can be found in Appendix F on page 72.

Every source used reminded youth and parents to visit the website, found at www.storycountyverb.org. This, along with weekly email updates, provided an optimal communication channel for the program that could be accessible to all. The website was also very easy to change in order to highlight new programs and changes in schedules or offerings. This website highlighted weekly VERB events and allowed for children to register and get new scorecards. The website also told of activities that were not listed on the scorecard, giving parents and children a reason to keep checking the website throughout the summer.

Logistics and Parameters of the Program

The VERB Summer Scorecard program provided opportunities and encouragement for youth to be active during the summer. To complete a scorecard, participants had to complete 16 hours of activity. Parents could initial 12 of the squares but youth were required to participate in at least 4 VERB sponsored activities per scorecard. These squares were designated on the scorecard with a different color and participants needed to obtain stickers at participating Cool Deal or Fun Calendar events to verify attendance. A diverse array of activities were available to accommodate to many different specific needs and still keep everyone involved active. Cool Deal and Fun Calendar events were also planned at an array of different times and places in order to meet needs of working parents or busy schedules of tweens. It was hypothesized that the organized Fun Events would be more popular than the Cool Deals.

Cool Deals were available throughout the summer at many area businesses in Ames. A Cool Deal is an offer by a local business for a discount such as two for one golf or free rock climbing. Cool Deals were available more often than Fun Events and each Cool Deal was either listed on the VERB Scorecard or promoted through the website and in emails. Businesses that offered Cool Deals included Ames/ISU Ice Arena, Cardinal Gymnastics, Carr Pool, Homewood Golf Course, ISU Lied Recreation Rock Climbing, Canoeing or Kayaking at Ada Hayden Park, Lin-Mar Mini Golf and Batting Cages, and 20th Century Bowling.

The Fun Calendar events were planned throughout the summer encouraging children to get out and be physically active. Most of the events were either planned and run by the VERB planning team or a booth would be set up at an already planned community event.

Tweens could enjoy playing volleyball with Iowa State Volleyball players, running the streets of Ames with the VERB Street Crew, or learning to play golf at the Ames Country Club. Events included “Tune into Main Street” Concerts at Tom Evans and Bandshell Park, ISU Athletics Sponsored Mini-Clinics in an array of different sports, Ames Soccer Club Clinics, Nature Hikes, Bike Rides, Golf Clinics, Day for All Ages, the 4th of July Parade and Booth, the Midnight Madness Run, A Disc Golf Tournament, and the VERB Grand Finale Swim Party.

Collection of Scorecards and Sponsors

The VERB Cool Deals and Fun Events served as ways to help the tweens fill up scorecards while being physically active. Each Cool Deal or Fun Event location had separate colorful stickers to help identify what the tweens were completing. After obtaining four of these stickers and twelve signatures from a parent or guardian, the tween could turn the card in for a prize. The prize for turning in one scorecard was a water bottle, a VERB “trinket” (e.g. hackysack, sticker, ball), and a coupon for either free ice cream or pizza at local restaurants. The tweens could then pick up a new card from any Cool Deal location, online, or any Park and Recreation Department to complete another. By completing multiple scorecards, youth could have more cards in the final raffle prizes which were to be drawn at the grand finale event (VERB Pool Party), which was held on August 17th). The prizes were provided by local area businesses and were selected to be salient and motivating to youth. Prizes included Ipods, a \$300 Gift Certificate for a Bike, a ski trip gift certificate, bike helmets, gift packs from area bike stores, and many other active gifts. These incentives were clearly motivational as a large number of youth (75) attended the grand finale event to see if their Scorecard would be drawn.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the VERB Summer Scorecard program included both formative and summative forms of evaluation. The evaluation was designed to determine the overall impact of the program as well as to obtain information that may improve program delivery or guide future programming efforts. The CDC evaluation framework was used to guide the overall program evaluation (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2002). Consistent with this guidebook, the evaluation was based on the proposed logic model that describes how we expect the programming to work (see Appendix A on page 64).

According to the CDC evaluation framework, a key component of an effective community physical activity program is to engage stakeholders in the planning process (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2002). The participating agencies and groups all had freedom to plan activities that best fit their needs and interests. Many of them came up with their own deals and were very involved. Locations such as the Ames Country Club used their own teachers to teach tweens the skills of playing golf. Community members got involved to give hikes around area parks and lead bike rides.

The process evaluation summarizes the programs that were conducted and the overall attendance/interest in these programs. This evaluation provided valuable information about the types of programming that are most useful and when and where to host them. The impact evaluation examines the impact that the programming had on youth's interest and involvement in physical activity. Emphasis was placed on the short and intermediate outcomes since it is unlikely to be able to detect change in long term outcomes from this brief summer-time program. Data for the impact evaluation was obtained through an online survey that was administered to the parents after the completion of the program. The survey

included specific questions on the degree of parent involvement and support in order to evaluate the importance of parent support for involvement in this type of program. The survey also included questions about the motivations and interest of the child. The survey was developed using an online tool called 'Survey Monkey' to facilitate distribution and data processing. The survey was distributed following the final event using email addresses provided by parents during the online registration process. The email message contained a letter explaining the evaluation of the VERB program with the attached participant and parent surveys. The email script and electronic survey were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to being distributed to the parents.

Analyses

The primary program (process) evaluation was conducted by tracking stickers that tweens included on their completed VERB scorecards. When visiting a VERB site, a color coded sticker would be placed on the VERB card. By tracking participation rates (through the color coded stickers) it was possible to determine the popularity of the different events. Because transportation and travel are major barriers to involvement, specific efforts were made to evaluate whether location impacted participation rates. Addresses of participants were obtained from the completed scorecards. By using Geodemographic Information System (GIS) tools it is possible to accurately compute travel distances as long as locations (addresses) were available. The ArcGIS program was used in the present study to compute average distances to VERB summer scorecard events. Correlations between average distances and participation rates were computed to determine if travel had an impact on involvement.

The outcome evaluation was designed to provide important data on the overall impact of the program on children's interest and involvement in the program. Emphasis was placed on measures identified in the logic model shown in Appendix A on page 64. Because a specific goal of the study was to determine the impact of parent involvement on participation, particular emphasis was placed on these results. Data from the survey was compiled from the administrative 'Survey Monkey' tools. Responses from individual items were extracted from the software and recoded in Microsoft Excel. The Excel file was then imported into SPSS for statistical analyses.

Analyses took place to demonstrate how VERB was affected by individual factors, interpersonal factors, organizational, and community-level factors. The parent survey helped to analyze if VERB did actually affect the activity levels of the children and what type of physical activity actually motivates them to participate. It also offered insights into strengths and weaknesses of the VERB program and factors that can be done to improve the program for subsequent years. Framework for the analysis followed the logic model found in Appendix A on page 64.

In receiving feedback from the parent survey, questions were aimed at teasing out parental interpersonal factors that might influence the child to partake in more physical activity. Specifically, parent involvement in physical activity and sport was stratified by three categories (if a scorecard was turned in, number of scorecards turned in, and child motivation to participate in VERB) to help to see if this type of involvement will increase VERB participation. The parent's own physical activity was also stratified by these same three categories to understand what effect the influence this may have on VERB participation. GIS analysis was also done using the parental information to determine if

physical environmental factors precluded children from participating. Other demographic issues of the parent/child relationship were also analyzed.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

A total of 414 tweens ages 8-13 signed up for the VERB program either at one of the events or on the website. All received the incentive for signing up, a VERB t-shirt, as well as a registration packet and weekly emails as to when VERB events were taking place. Of these registered tweens, 26.8% (n=111) completed at least one scorecard. My original hypothesis, which was based on current activity data as well as the 2006 VERB Survey, stated that there would be higher involvement by younger aged participants as well as higher involvement by Ames residents. Indeed more younger aged participants did turn in scorecards and participate with 65.2% being from the half of the group at 8 to 10 years old. Of the participants turning in scorecards 21.7% (n = 27) were 8 years old, 25.8% (n = 32) were 9 years old, 17.7% (n = 22) were 10 years old, 9.6% (n = 12) were 11 years old, 10.5% (n = 13) were 12 years old, and 10.5% (n = 13) participants were 13 years old. More Ames tweens were signed up for the program than any other community with 285 (68.8%) of the participants being from Ames and the majority of the rest being from the smaller communities of Huxley, Nevada, Story City, Gilbert, Cambridge, and Slater. The results summarize the participation rates (process data) from the scorecard and the perceptions from the parent survey (outcome data). The following sections will help to summarize some of the factors influencing participation rates and involvement in the program.

Scorecard Data

A total of 232 scorecards were handed in. A total of 214 (92.2%) of these were completed scorecards meaning that all 16 boxes were filled in including at least four stickers from Cool Deals or Fun Events. Of the completed scorecards, 196 (91.6%) were from the

111 registered participants, while the rest came from 13 participants who were not registered for the program. Of the scorecards handed in, 86 of the 124 participants (69.4%) who handed in the cards were from the Ames.

Figure 1 on page 41 shows the individual breakdown of number of scorecards handed in per person. The majority of participants (n=74, 59.7%) handed in one scorecards, while 22.6% (n=28) handed in two scorecards, 8.1% (n=10) handed in three scorecards, 4.8% (n=6) handed in four scorecards, and 4.8% (n=6) handed in five scorecards.

There were 820 stickers contained on the 232 scorecards handed in. The stickers were color coded to facilitate tracking participation rates. While companies were supposed to write a certain symbol on the stickers, one of the symbols was unable to be identified by location, so 30 stickers were unable to be identified. Of the 790 stickers that were able to be identified, 62.4% (n=493) were from Cool Deal locations, while the other 37.6% (n=297) were stickers from Fun Events.

There were a total of 11 Fun Events and 9 Cool Deal Locations. The figures and tables on pages 42 and 43 show the breakdown of stickers recorded from VERB Scorecards that were handed in by the tweens in the program. Figure 2 and Table 1 details the amount of stickers recorded that were from each individual Fun Event. Figure 4 and Table 2 shows the number of stickers per Cool Deal Location.

Geographical Data

Analysis was done using ArcGIS software and area maps to determine the distances from participants families' homes to Fun Event and Cool Deal Locations. Mean distances were first calculated from each household to each event. Then, using data from scorecards that were handed in, mean distances were calculated for those who participated in the event

and compared to mean distances from events to those who did not participate in the events. Distances for each event were calculated with the exclusion of the ISU Athletic Events. This event was excluded due to many meeting places of this event. Measurements are shown on page 44 in Table 3 and are presented in miles as the crow flies.

Correlation analysis was conducted between the mean distances away from each location and the number of people participating in the event. The overall correlation was $r = -0.18$. The low value and negative association indicate that distance was not an important determinant of involvement in the program (see Figure 4 on page 45).

Parent Survey Data

The survey was sent out to all parents of the 414 registered participants and a deadline of one month was given for the parent to complete the survey. The email sent out with the survey supplied a link in which the parents could click to enter the Survey Monkey survey tool. The email to parents specifically asked parents to complete surveys separately for each of their participating children. Initially, 66 parents filled out surveys. Two weeks later, a reminder email was sent out to them as well, specifying that the survey process would close after two more weeks. After this email, 36 more surveys were completed for a total of 102 surveys. Of these surveys, 97 (95.1%) of them were 100% completed, while the other five were missing answers to one or more questions.

Demographic information was first examined to determine the characteristics of the respondents. The parent that completed the survey was typically the mother ($n = 88$, 89.8%) rather than the father ($n = 10$, 10.2%). The average age of the parent filling out the survey was 40.9 years. More surveys were filled out regarding a child who was male ($n = 57$, 55.9%) rather than female ($n = 45$, 44.1%). While all of the children's ages was between 8

and 13 years, more of those in the survey were on the younger side. A total of 30 were 8 years old (29.4%), 21 were 9 years old (20.6%), 21 were 10 years old (20.6%), 14 were 11 years old (13.7%), 13 were 12 years old (12.7%), and 3 were 13 years old (2.9%). When asked about the child's grade, the breakdown showed a bit of a different outlook than the child's age with 8 in 2nd grade (7.8%), 29 in 3rd grade (28.4%), 17 in 4th grade (16.7%), 22 in 5th grade (21.6%), 13 in 6th grade (12.7%), 10 in 7th grade (9.8%), and 3 in 8th grade (2.9%).

Data was obtained on child BMI to determine the weight status of children participating in the program. Of the 89 surveys which answered a question regarding height, the average height of the children was 56.4 inches (SD = 5.9) with the range carrying from 46 inches to 77 inches. A total of 90 surveys completed the question on weight with the average weight for the child being 81.3 pounds (SD = 24.6) with a range from 47 pounds to 175 pounds. This average did not change much based on gender as the average weight for females was 82.64 (SD = 28.155) and the average weight for males was 80.04 (SD = 21.115). The average BMI of the participants was 17.66 (SD = 3.34) for males and 17.96 (SD = 3.77) for females, respectively.

Geographic location of the respondents was examined to determine the involvement across Story County. The participants of the survey were from many different towns, but as was hypothesized, an overwhelming majority of them were from Ames (73.3%, n = 74). Other cities in Story County that had participants complete surveys were Nevada (8.9%, n = 9), Story City (5%, n = 5), Gilbert (5%, n = 5), Cambridge (3%, n = 3), Huxley (2%, n = 2), Zeiring (1%, n = 1), Slater (1%, n = 1), and Kelley (1%, n = 1). The children attended a total of 15 different schools, giving insight to how powerful handing out information to all of the schools actually was. Many of the participants came from schools in Ames (64%) such as

Ames Middle School (19%, n = 19), Fellows Elementary School (12%, n = 12), Meeker Elementary School (11%, n = 11), Sawyer Elementary School (8%, n = 8), Mitchell Elementary School (6%, n = 6), Edwards Elementary School (6%, n = 6), St. Cecilia (2%, n = 2). Schools in other communities also had fairly high numbers of returns including Gilbert Schools (11%, n = 11), Ballard Schools (8%, n = 8), Central Elementary School in Nevada (5%, n = 5). Rolland-Story Schools (4%, n = 4), Nevada Middle School (3%, n = 3), Clemons Lutheran (1%, n = 1) and Eldora Schools (1%, n = 1). Three of the participants were also home schooled (3%).

Information about interest in child's physical activity was examined to determine the type of child that was attracted or interested in the program. When asked about their child's interest in physical activity, 51.5% (n = 51) replied with "My child is very interested in physical activity and sports" while 44.4% (n = 44) replied with "My child is somewhat interested in physical activity and sports". Only 4% (n = 4) replied with "My child is not interested in physical activity and sports". When asked how involved the parent was in their child's physical activity and sport participation, 46.5% (n = 46) responded being very involved, 51.5% (n = 51) responded as moderately involved, and 2% (n = 2) responded as being not involved whatsoever.

Questions on the survey also asked specifically about participation in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program and how parent's felt this influenced their child's physical activity level. When asked how motivated their children were to participate in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program, 44.9% (n = 44) responded that their child was very motivated, 45.9% (n = 45) responded that their child was somewhat motivated, and 9.2% (n = 9) responded that their child was not motivated. Motivation tended to be associated with

completing a scorecard. A total of 73 of the 99 youth with favorable motivation (73.7%) completed a scorecard. Of those who completed a scorecard, the majority completed either one or two VERB scorecards but many reported completing up to five VERB scorecards. Those who only completed one scorecard comprised 34.2% of the sample ($n = 25$), while those who completed two made up 37% ($n = 27$) of the sample. The few who completed more than two scorecards included 13 (17.8%) who completed three VERB scorecards, 5 (6.8%) who completed four VERB scorecards, and 3 (4.1%) who completed five or more scorecards. Figures 1 (page 41) and 5 (page 46) compare number of scorecards handed in per person versus survey results of number of scorecards handed in.

Those who indicated that their child had not completed any scorecards offered many reasons why they were unable to complete one. Of the 20 total who answered this question, 16 (80%) said that the times and scheduling was inconvenient, 2 (10%) were unaware of events taking place, 4 (20%) said that their child was not interested in any of the events, and 1 (5%) did not understand how it worked. Others cited reasons such as being busy throughout the summer, not being able to earn the stickers on the card even though they had hours of activity, and being busy during the designated times even though they may have done the Cool Deal activities at other times. Many parents commented about the requirement that made it mandatory to have four Cool Deal or Fun Event Stickers on the scorecard. Some felt their child could have fully participated if parents could sign off on all squares on the scorecard.

Additional questions on the survey asked about the specific programs that children participated in. This information complemented the information obtained directly from the scorecard since it made it possible to examine possible associations with family and

demographic variables. This question was skipped by some respondents, possibly because they weren't sure of the events that their child completed. Only 87 responses were recorded in regards to attending Cool Deals and 86 responses in regards to VERB Fun Events. Figure 6 and Table 4 on page 47 shows the results of participation in the Fun Event location activities per activity. Figure 7 and Table 5 on page 48 shows the results of participation of Cool Deals.

Questions about the impact of advertising and marketing were evaluated to determine how parents and children heard about the VERB Summer Scorecard program. When asked where the child first found out about the VERB Summer Scorecard Program, the majority (89.2%, n = 83) said that their child first found out about it in the letter that was brought home from school. Overall, distributions in schools was very successful as 88.7% (n = 86) of parents report receiving the Scorecard through the school system. Other forms of hearing about the VERB Summer Scorecard Program for the first time was hearing from a friend (8.6%, n = 8), seeing the VERB booth at a local event (6.5%, n = 6), seeing an advertisement in a newspaper, poster, or on television (6.5%, n = 6). Although these forms of advertisement were available, 63.4% (n = 59) said that they did not ever view them.

Although conventional forms of advertisements may not have had an impact on the campaign, questions were formulated on other forms of advertisement such as the emails and website. Parents reported the emails sent out to parents to be important to the program, with 95.9% (n = 93) answering that they received the email messages and found them useful. 57.7% (n = 56) of parents also said that they used the website a couple of times while 28.9% (n = 28) frequented the website often.

One of the reasons why VERB has been successful in the past is that the name advertisements for VERB has created a brand name. When parents were asked about this brand name recognition, many of them were not aware of the name VERB before the campaign. A total of 38.9% (n = 37) of parents said that their child was not aware of the VERB brand name before the program while a similar percentage said that they were not aware of this either.

Final questions asked about the child's impression of the VERB Summer Scorecard Program. Most, 79% (n = 71), said that their child would definitely participate in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program if available while 22.7% (n = 22) said their child may participate again. Only 4.1% (n = 4) said they would not participate.

Many parents provided suggestions for improving the program in the future. The comments varied but a few consistently showed up focusing on prizes and overall program design. Some parents were upset that their child was not able to claim the grand prizes since they were only given away to tweens who were able to come to the grand finale swim party. While smaller prizes were made available to these tweens not attending, it was stated at the beginning that winning of grand prizes required attendance at the finale event.

Many comments focused on the overall design of the VERB program. Parents who did not live in Ames commented that there should be more activities in the other communities in Story County such as the Fawcett Family Center in Nevada. This comment is justified and is something that was worked in throughout the summer with many new deals coming from mid to late July in these communities. This is also something that the 2008 VERB program should focus on as an improvement. Parents also consistently gave feedback on the use of stickers to track the different Cool Deal and Fun Events that were attended.

Many were upset because their child could have turned in many more cards if the Cool Deal and Fun Events were not required. The same kind of feedback was given in the 2006 VERB program where eight stickers were required. With this feedback, the 2007 program downsized to only requiring four stickers. More specifically though, some said that their child actually did the activities on the scorecard, but just not at the right time. Others said they were not able to do the things because their time was conflicted by other summer activities. One suggestion by a parent was to allow both activity and the events to count, but have separate sections on the card for them. Even with the comments, it seemed as if a diverse set of activities on many different days were available in the program. With this feedback and the results of the activities though, an effort should be taken by the 2008 VERB program to either expand or diversify the times and events. Although there were many suggestions, the majority of the parents made sure to point out that the program did offer opportunities for their children that they had not gotten before or did not get often. They also made clear that the program did help to increase their child's activity by having fun filled events to look forward to.

Parent Involvement

Other than evaluating the VERB program, one of the major aims of this study was to evaluate if parent involvement positively affected the participation rates of the youth in the program. Much of the literature that has been written on the topic suggests that in a program such as this, having a parent involved would positively influence a child's participation rate. My hypothesis was based on this research, predicting that parent involvement will have an important influence in the program. When assessing this, there were two ways to look at it: if parent involvement in their child's physical activity would make a difference and if the

own parent's physical activity would make a difference in their youth's involvement in both the program and the everyday physical activity.

To look at this, we used the parent survey to stratify results based on parent responses to the question "How involved are you in your child's physical activity and sports?" The level of parent involvement was then related to answers to three other questions on the survey. Out of the sample of 46 parents who answered that they were very involved with the physical activity of their youth, 35 (76.1%) of their youth turned in scorecards, 28 (60.9%) of their youth reported that their child was very motivated to fill out a scorecard and participate in VERB. This group was also more involved accounting for a bigger percentage of scorecards turned in. While few turned in more than one scorecard, this group with highly involved parents included 9 of the 13 participants who completed three VERB scorecards, 4 of the 5 who completed four VERB scorecards, and 2 of the 3 who completed five or more scorecards. When comparing this to those 51 parents who reported they were moderately involved in their child's physical activity and sports, a smaller percentage ($n = 37$, 72.5%) reported that their child completed a scorecard and an even smaller percentage ($n = 15$, 29.4%) reported that their child was very motivated to fill out a scorecard and participate in VERB. In fact, the moderately involved parents primarily reported ($n = 30$, 58.8%) that their child was moderately motivated as well. While many of the very involved parents showed that their child would turn in many more than one scorecard, the moderately involved parent's youth mostly turned in either one scorecard ($n = 19$, 37.3%) or two scorecards ($n = 12$, 23.5%). Only six (11.8%) of the moderately motivated parents reported that their child handed in more than two scorecards. It was not possible to conclude anything on those

parents who reported that they were not involved in their child's physical activity and sports because this sample made up only two parents.

The question of the parents own physical activity was also stratified and related to responses of turning in a scorecard and child motivation. One problem came up when stratifying it in this way. Few of the parents reported that they were physically active more than one time per week so results had to be stratified to three groups: very active (2-7 times per week), slightly active (1 time per week to every few weeks), or not active. Of the 20 who were very active, 12 (60%) of their children reported turning in scorecards. Of the 61 who were slightly active, 48 (78.6) reported that their child turned in a scorecard. Of the 21 who were not active, 14 (66.7%) reported that their child did turn in scorecards. No trends were seen between the parents' physical activity and the number of scorecards turned in. Interestingly, parents who reported a greater amount of physical activity reported less motivation by their child to participate in VERB than did parents who were slightly or not active in their own physical activity at all.

Results: Tables and Figures

Figure 1. Number of scorecards handed in per participant.

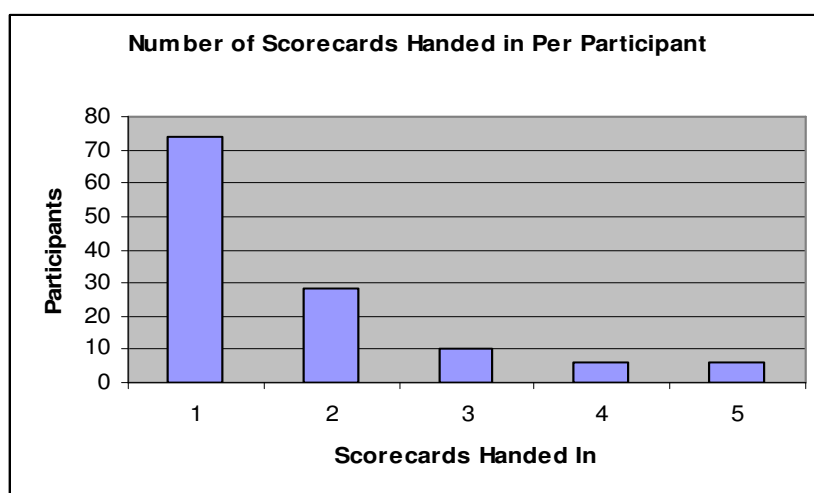
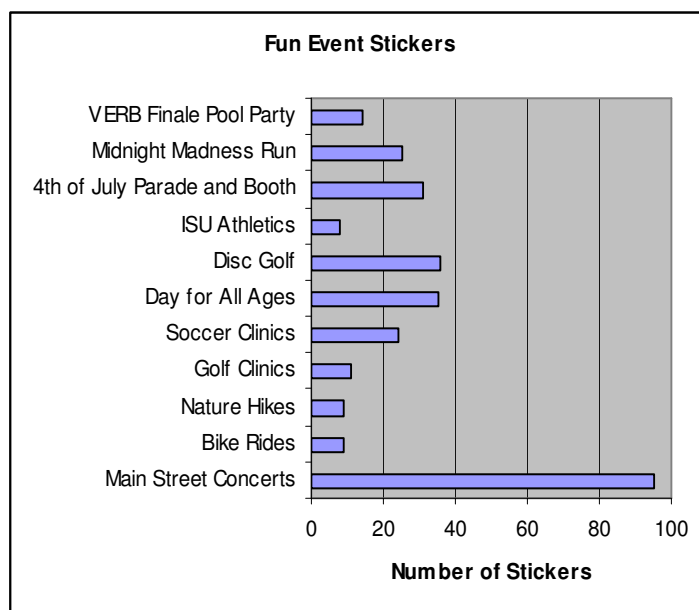
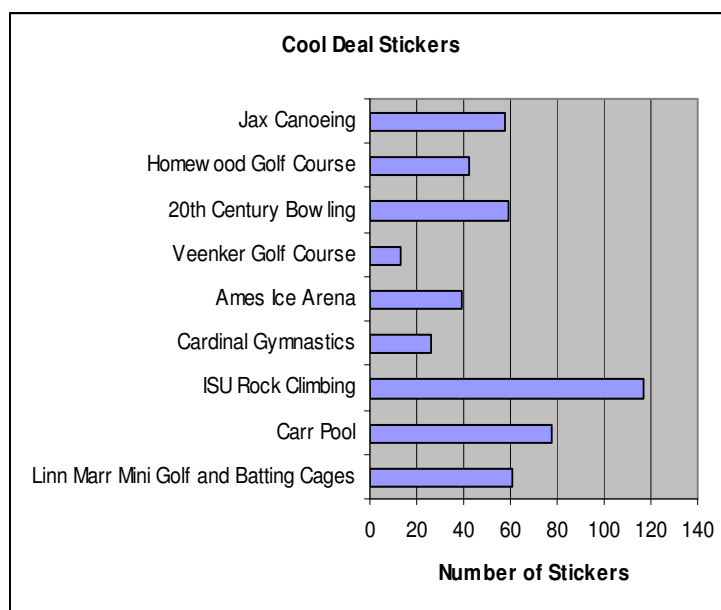


Figure 2. Number of stickers turned in per Fun Event Location**Table 1.** Number of stickers turned in per Fun Event Location

Fun Event Stickers	Number of Stickers
VERB Finale Pool Party	14
Midnight Madness Run	25
4 th of July Parade and Booth	31
ISU Athletics	8
Disc Golf	36
Day for All Ages	35
Soccer Clinics	24
Golf Clinics	11
Nature Hikes	9
Bike Rides	9
Main Street Concerts	95

Figure 3. Number of stickers turned in per Cool Deal Location**Table 2.** Number of stickers turned in per Fun Event Location

Cool Deal Sticker Locations	Number of Stickers
JAX Canoeing	58
Homewood Golf Course	42
20 th Century Bowling	59
Veenker Golf Course	13
Ames Ice Arena	39
Cardinal Gymnastics	26
ISU Rock Climbing	117
Carr Pool	78
Linn Marr Mini Golf and Batting Cages	61

Table 3. Measurements in miles of Cool Deal and Fun Event Locations from the homes of participants.

(Units in Miles)			
Location	Overall Average	Participated Average	Did Not Participate Average
Linn Marr Mini Golf and Batting Cages	4.6	3.8	4.9
Carr Pool	4.7	2.9	5.2
ISU Rock Climbing	4.1	4.5	3.8
Cardinal Gymnastics	4.1	3.1	4.3
Ames Ice Arena	4.5	5.8	4.3
Veenker Golf Course	4.1	5.7	4.0
20th Century Bowling	4.7	4.8	4.6
Homewood Golf Course	4.6	4.2	4.6
Jax Canoeing	5.1	6.6	4.6
Main Street Concerts	4.6	3.5	5.1
Bike Rides	4.3	5.1	4.3
Nature Hikes	4.7	4.3	4.7
Golf Clinics	4.9	6.7	4.7
Soccer Clinics	5.2	4.6	5.3
Day for All Ages	4.5	5.4	4.2
Disc Golf	4.5	4.8	4.4
4th of July Parade and Booth	4.5	4.5	4.5
Midnight Madness Run	4.4	3.1	4.7
VERB Finale Pool Party	10.8	11.4	10.8
Mean	4.9	5.0	4.9
Standard Deviation	1.5	1.9	1.5

Figure 4. Correlation of mean distances of each event and number of people participating in that event.

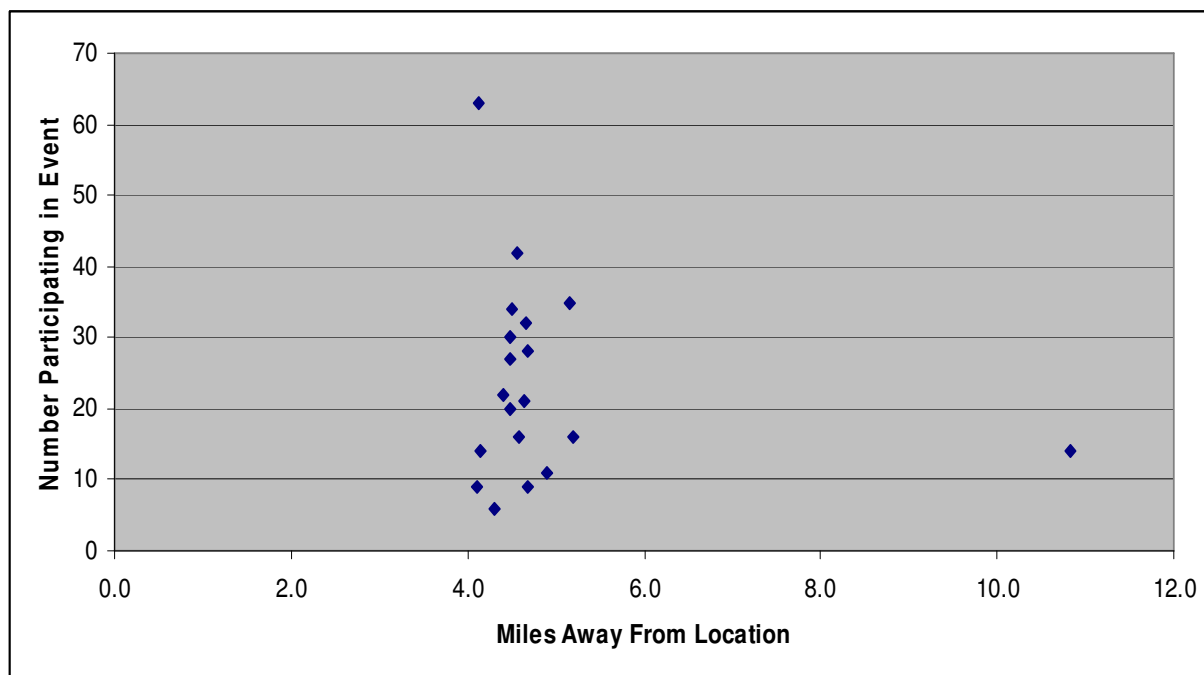


Figure 5. Number of scorecards reported being handed in per participant according to parent survey.

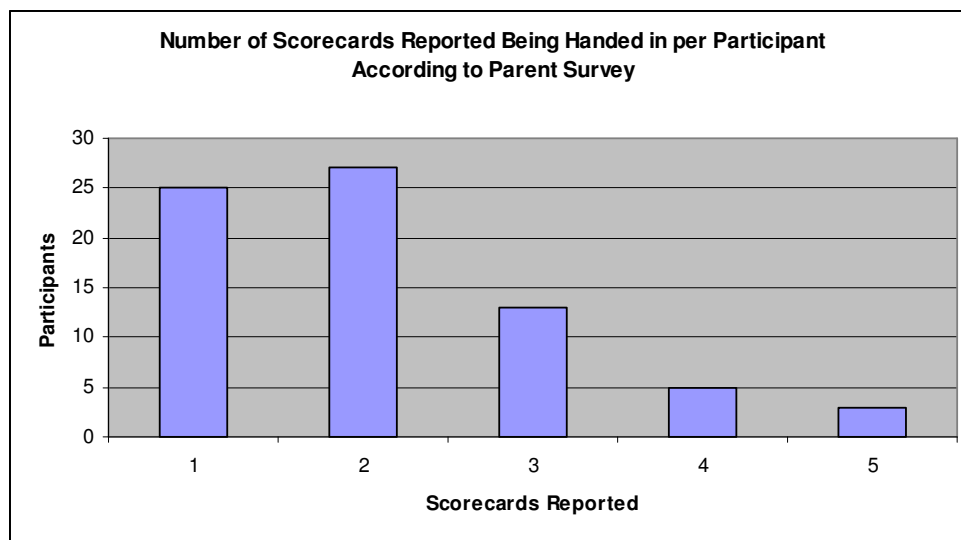
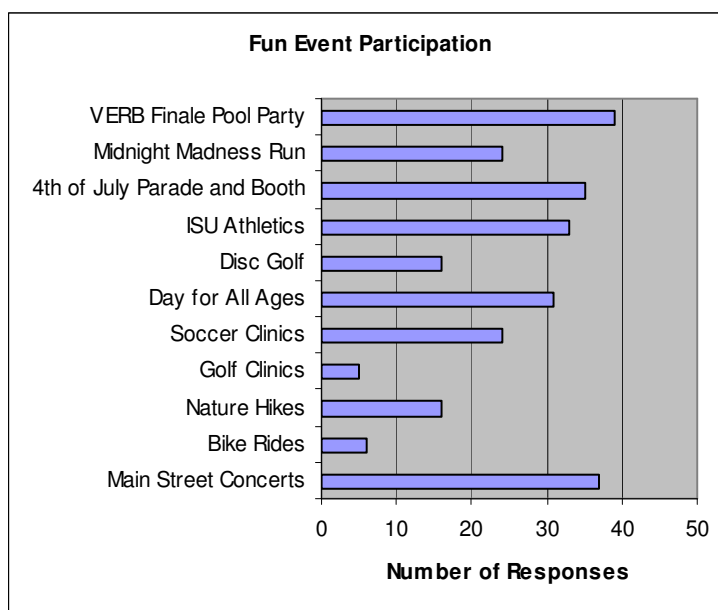
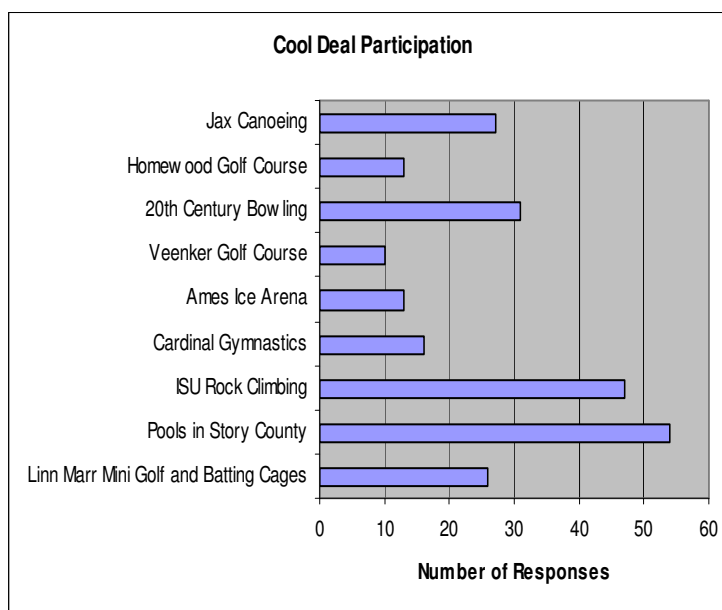


Figure 6. Results of participation of Fun Events as reported in the parent survey**Table 4.** Results of participation of Fun Events as reported in the parent survey

Fun Events Locations	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
VERB Finale Pool Party	39	45.30%
Midnight Madness Run	24	27.90%
4 th of July Parade and Booth	35	40.70%
ISU Athletics	33	38.40%
Disc Golf	16	18.60%
Day for All Ages	31	36%
Soccer Clinics	24	27.90%
Golf Clinics	5	5.80%
Nature Hikes	16	18.60%
Bike Rides	6	7%
Main Street Concerts	37	43%

Figure 7. Results of participation of Cool Deals as reported in the parent survey**Table 5.** Results of participation of Cool Deals as reported in the parent survey

Cool Deal Sticker Locations	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Linn Marr Mini Golf and Batting Cages	26	29.90%
Pools in Story County	54	62.10%
ISU Rock Climbing	47	54%
Cardinal Gymnastics	16	18.40%
Ames Ice Arena	13	14.90%
Veenker Golf Course	10	11.50%
20th Century Bowling	31	35.60%
Homewood Golf Course	13	13.80%
Jax Canoeing	27	31%

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction

The effectiveness of the 2007 VERB Summer Scorecard Program was measured both from a process and impact standpoint throughout the summer. Without looking into the data, the program would be deemed a success simply due to improvements from the 2006 program. The 2007 program more than doubled the number of participants and interest in events of the 2006 program. The discussion provides an analysis of scorecard, geographical, and survey data in order to determine future goals and direction of the program

In addition to being a tool to allow the program to grow, the research also served two specific aims. The following two aims were formed before research started and serve as the groundwork for this conclusion:

1. To determine factors influencing participation rates and involvement in the program.

I hypothesized that there would be higher involvement by younger youth and greater involvement by Ames residents compared to other communities. The hypothesis was based on past VERB results (2006 Verb Survey) and trends in activity patterns.

2. To determine the role of parent involvement on successful completion of the VERB Summer Scorecard Program.

I hypothesized that parent involvement would have an important influence on involvement in the program. Specifically, I expect that youth will be more likely to complete a scorecard if their parents are actively involved. This hypothesis was based on possible differences in parent demographics and community resources/support, as well as home placement compared to VERB activities.

Scorecard Data

The total of 414 tweens in the age group of 8 to 13 was a major improvement from the 2006 program. Although this may have been an improvement of tweens that were involved, only 26.8% actually handed in a scorecard. Many parents commented on the fact that their child would be able to hand in more scorecards if four stickers from Fun Event or

Cool Deal locations were not mandatory. While this would be the case, there would be no partnership with the community in this situation. Since the VERB Summer Scorecard is in its second year in Story County, this has in fact been an issue before. The original scorecard had places for 16 stickers from partnership locations. After hearing similar complaints, the number had been taken down to four for this year. Another reason only one scorecard was handed in may come down to the fact that there is no more incentive to hand in more than one card. After one card is handed in, the participant was able to get small prizes such as a hacky sack, water bottle, and coupon for either a free ice cream dish or free personal pizza. For turning in a second card, the same incentives were made available. The only greater incentive was that there was a better chance of the tween's name being drawn at the Grand Finale. While this incentive was there at the summation of the program, future programs should focus on increasing sustenance of prizes throughout the program to keep participants stepping forward with each card onto bigger and better things not just at the end, but also throughout.

While parents may have found it hard to have their child fill up four stickers on a card, another way to fix this situation would be to find more Cool Deal sponsors and create more Fun Events around the county. The 2007 VERB Summer Scorecard campaign held 11 different Fun Event offerings and 9 different Cool Deal locations. Opposed to the hypothesis that the Fun Events would be more popular than the Cool Deals, more stickers were tracked from Cool Deal locations. 62% of stickers that were counted were from Cool Deal locations. It became very apparent that these appealed to the parents and tweens more for one reason: they were more convenient and were offered more often throughout the week.

Many parents also commented that there needed to be more activities outside of Ames. While the majority of participants (68.8%) were from Ames, the program would benefit from creating events in other communities throughout the entirety of Story County. Many of the events that were used by the VERB planning team were events that had to be run specifically by VERB members. The CDC's Physical Activity Evaluation Framework states that community stakeholders should take part in having and developing programs (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2002). By involving other groups and letting them take claim to certain activities, VERB could maximize opportunities throughout the county only having to do minimal planning.

A large percentage of those who handed in scorecards were from the lower age group in VERB, with 65.2% being aged 8 to 10. To maximize the entire group of 8 to 13, many parents commented that things could be done such as having a different scorecard for different age groups or having older and younger events.

When looking into the Cool Deal and Fun Event location stickers, there was a great majority ($n = 95$) that were from Main Street Concerts. There are many reasons why this location was so popular. It took up a large amount of time throughout the week. It was one night every week throughout the summer, from 5:00 to 9:00 pm. When going to the events, there was a pretty consistent group of tweens who showed up to the event every time. There were problems with the event though. While the philosophy of the program focuses on increasing youth physical activity, this sticker was the easiest physically to receive. At other booths that the VERB program had around town, the tween would have to do something physically active such as swim, bike, or do an obstacle course. At the concerts, stickers were handed out without anything physical being required so they were easier to get because

parents could drop their son or daughter off each week, they could get a sticker, and then get back in the car.

There were other events that were popular such as disc golf, ISU rock climbing, and Carr Pool. In addition to expanding times in these events, efforts should be made to mimic these events in different communities in order to gain interest in VERB. Knowing that these kind of events and deals appeal to the tween population can help to establish an appeal for VERB in alternative communities.

Geographical Data

After assessing ArcGIS data and comparing distances from home to each Cool Deal or Fun Event location, no correlation was found between distance from an event and whether the child participated in the event ($r = -0.18$). When looking at the average distances from all 124 participants, those who participated in the events actually were on average farther away from the event than those who did not participate. It is important to note that for many of the activities, there were more who did not participate than those who did.

While it was thought that this distance may be one of the correlates to participation, many events were held around in parks where parents often had to drop their kids off. This program, also being a county-wide program saw many people traveling from other communities to come to events in Ames.

Parent Survey Data

A survey completion rate of 24.6% was shown on the VERB parent survey. Demographic information showed similar trends to the demographic information obtained on the scorecards. Similarly, most participants were younger and were from the town of Ames.

Many more mothers (89.8%) filled out the survey than did fathers of children in the program. This was very consistent with what was seen throughout the program and previous findings that mothers play the greatest role of influence on physical activity in the family. The mother was often the one who inquired about the program and who would drop their child off at the activities. In 1991, Moore et al. concluded that children of active mothers were 2.0 times more likely to be active. Not to say that fathers were not involved, but more often, the mother was the stakeholder.

Similar trends were found in the Fun Events and Cool Deals that were participated in. Parents have tweens that are most interested in Main Street Concerts, pools, and rock climbing in Story County. This information can be used to help establish a base for future programming.

Parents found the new forms of communication that were added this year favorable. With the addition of emails and the website, this non traditional form of advertisement seemed to keep participants as stakeholders. Parents responded that the emails were very useful and they frequented the website often.

Parent Involvement

The study aimed to evaluate if parent involvement positively affected the participation rates of the program. There has been conflicting evidence on the role of parent involvement. Kimiecik, Horn, & Shurin (1996) concluded that a child's perceptions of their parent's beliefs has nothing to do with their own moderate to vigorous physical activity. According to the results, those parents who reported that they were highly involved in their child's physical activity had tweens that were more likely to be positively motivated for the VERB program and turn in more scorecards.

Research has been done suggesting that the parents own physical activity is a greater influence on the child than just their encouragement (Moore et. al, 1991). Parent activity did not appear to influence the VERB program. In fact, parents who were not physically active had children with greater involvement than did those parents who were moderately or very active. This confirms past work that shows that parent involvement, encouragement, and expectations are more important than parent physical activity level (Welk, Wood, & Morss, 2003).

Limitations

A limitation of the study was the inability to obtain information from non-participants. The program provides new opportunities for youth to be active but it is not possible to determine if the program really helped youth increase activity levels. CDC's Physical Activity Evaluation Framework states that community stakeholders should take part in having and developing programs (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2002). While the partners and companies who established VERB events did develop their own programs and deals throughout the community, information after this point was not kept (other than participation numbers). To fully take advantage of the community stakeholders in future VERB programming, after each partner decides what type of activity they want to do, additional surveys should be sent out both throughout the program and at the end of the program.

Lessons Learned in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program

Conducting a large community program is a complex task that requires help and coordination from a large set of dedicated individuals. Good communication is critical to make the program run smoothly. Being that students of Iowa State University made up most

of the planning team, stages of planning went relatively smooth starting in October and going through the beginning of the program in June. The problems with the program arose in the summer time, when many of the individuals that had committed to being a part of the program moved away or had other engagement. In that time, only three people were left to put on four to five events each week.

Some stickers were not able to be identified. A great improvement in tracking stickers could simply be made in future years by allowing for more choices in stickers and better educating the workers at every event and Cool Deal location of what they need to do with the stickers. A greater variance of stickers would allow for fewer mistakes in identification.

The VERB program was also very technology based which could have limited some participation, but this fact actually seemed to enhance it. While no technology was used in 2006, the addition of the emails and website saw a great increase in number of registrations. Reminders were always sent through email and the intention was for the participants to check the website weekly for details on events. There was a high percentage of parents who said that the website and email reminders were very helpful. While the email and the website were rated as useful, one major limitation of the program was its lack of traditional publicity. While more people than ever in the community were aware of the VERB name, the program that is based on publicity was limited this year due to late starts on new venues of communication. Three such media sources were used. These included a newspaper advertisement, which was very expensive and only was shown three days. A radio advertisement started playing midway through the summer on a local radio station as well and a television advertisement started playing in thirty minute intervals on the local public

address channel with one month to go in the program. This late form of advertisement was only seen by just over 6% of the parents who filled out the surveys. The program also has to deal with the number of different media sources that have messages and need to be differentiated (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004). The program is making headway though because nearly a third of the parents and children first found out about the brand name VERB at the beginning of the 2007 campaign. The majority of students first found out about VERB in school, which shows the strength of the partnership the program has with the school districts, but few saw any advertisement outside of school. More time should be spent on advertising while still using the current strengths of the connections to the school district and Parks and Recreational departments.

Recommendations for Future Programming

As the VERB program grows yearly, there are several things that can be done to facilitate its growth. First, many parents from other communities would like their tweens to get involved and are looking for a program such as this. The first step to expansion to other communities would be finding stakeholders in those communities who could help plan to take pressure off the VERB planning team.

Recognition will grow yearly, but can be helped along by improving mass media campaign efforts. The inconsistency and lateness that was seen in the mass media advertising accounted for the very low rate of recognition of advertising for the 2007 program. Now that the advertisements are made up, advertising should start in April to facilitate better recognition.

In planning the 2008 VERB program, the results of the stickers handed in will become very important. Efforts should be made to first line up these Fun Events and Cool

Deals to be part of the program. This will allow those who have done VERB in the past to have familiar places to be involved and also help new people find fun events. While 79% of the parents surveyed said their child would definitely do the program again, the 2008 VERB program can use a similar roadmap with these results to peak that involvement with new tweens.

Chapter 6: References

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Appendices: VERB Advertisement and Survey Materials

Appendix A: VERB Summer Scorecard – Logic Model

Appendix B: 2007 VERB Summer Scorecard

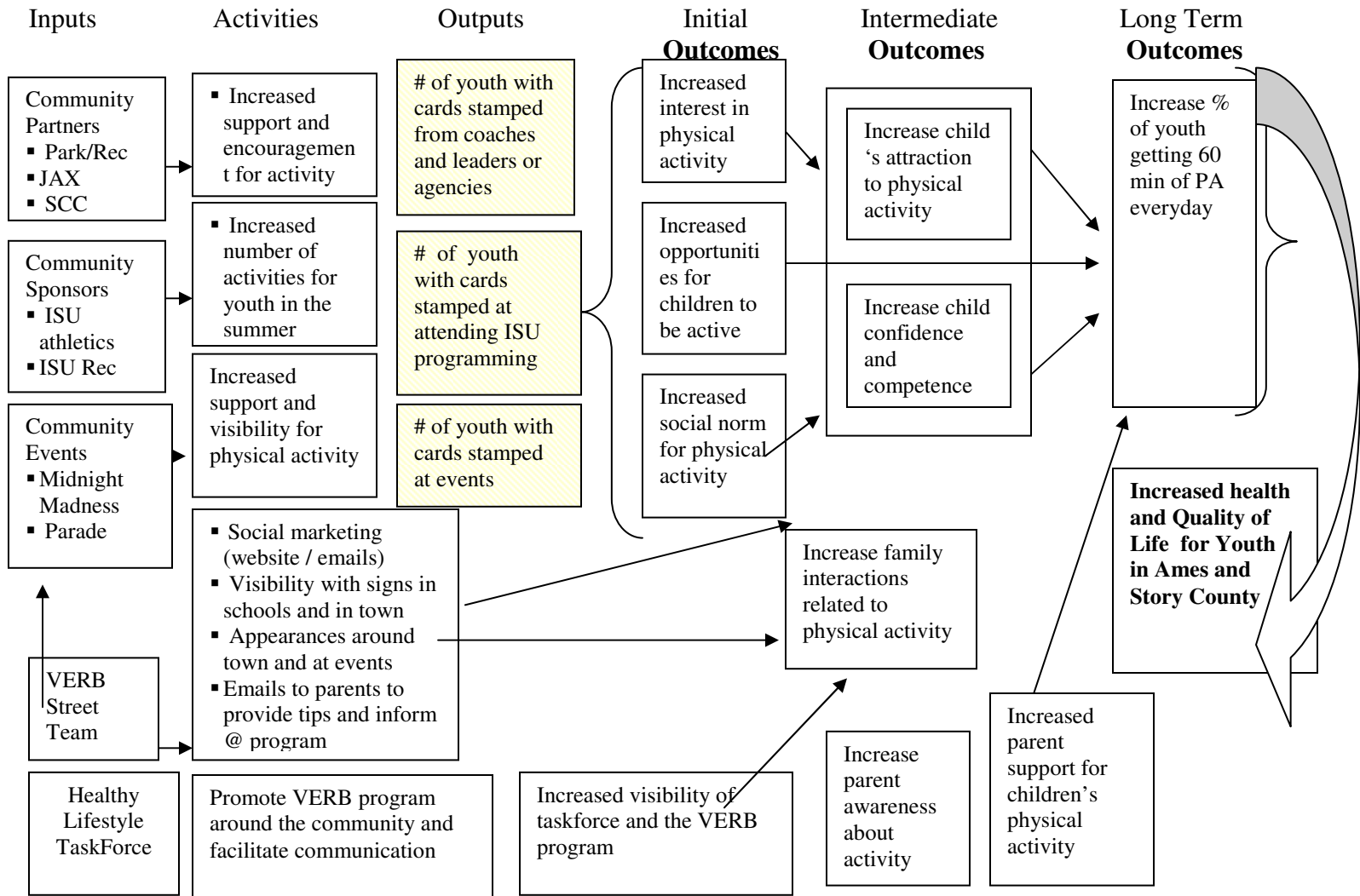
Appendix C: Final VERB Survey Invitation – Sent out through email

Appendix D: VERB Summer Scorecard Parent Evaluation

Appendix E: VERB Newspaper Advertisement

Appendix F: Script for VERB Radio and Television Advertisement

VERB Summer Scorecard – Logic Model



Appendix B: 2007 VERB Summer Scorecard

Turn in Completed scorecards to the Ames, Nevada and Huxley Parks and Recreation Offices to get cool stuff and to be entered into the VERB Finale drawing for other prizes. Or mail to: Story County VERB, 235 Forker Building, Ames, IA 50011. Once you have completed this scorecard, **pick up another one** at any of the cool deal locations.

Turn in completed VERB Scorecards to get:

- > VERB gear - hacky sacks, bags, visors and more!
- > Kid's Creations at Cold Stone Creamery
- > Water bottles from Skunk River Cycles, Bike World, or the ISU Bookstore
- > Personal pizzas at Happy Joe's

Completed Scorecards will also be entered into a drawing at the VERB Finale for tons of cool prizes like:

- > IPODs
- > Bike Gear from Skunk River Cycles and Bike World
- > Prize packages from Seven Oaks Recreation (Snowboarding, Paintballing, and Canoeing)
- > A Bowling Party from 20th Century Bowling
- > Wal-Mart Gift Card > And Much More!

The VERB Summer Scorecard program is coordinated by the Dept. of Health and Human Performance in partnership with the Story County Healthy Lifestyles Taskforce. Participation in this program is voluntary. These groups are not responsible for any injury or illness during this program.

Check out the website for more deals and events. Register online for periodic email updates and reminders. For questions call the VERB office at 294-6967 or email jkubersk@iastate.edu.

The project was developed with funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Building Healthy Communities in Iowa Through Walkin' Wellness Grants) that are administered through the Iowa Department of Public Health.



VERB™

It's what you do.

Summer Scorecard

June 2 – August 17

name _____ M. or F. circle one

date of birth _____ phone _____

address _____

city _____ state _____ zip _____

parent's email _____

parents signature _____

Story County Lifestyles Taskforce

www.storycountyVERB.org

Thanks to our other Sponsors! > ISU Department of Health and Human Performance > Coca-Cola > United Way > Iowa Sports Foundation

Ames/ISU Ice Arena 2 for 1 ice-skating during all public skate times, rental skates not included (292-6835)

Cardinal Gymnastics Open Gym for \$3 at Beyer Hall, Fri. 5:30-7:30pm (294-8787) *

Car Pool 2 for 1 swimming on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday after 5pm (233-2679)

Homewood Golf Course 2 for 1 golf on weekdays from 10-3pm (239-5363)

ISU Lied Recreation Rock Climbing Wall 2 FREE climbs, Tues. & Thurs. 4:30-9:30pm (294-2929) *

JAX Outdoor Gear FREE 1/2 hour Canoe or Kayak rental at Add Hayden Park, Sat. & Sun, 10am-5:30pm (292-2276) *

Lin-Mar Mini-Golf Batting Cages 2 for 1 mini-golf and batting cages all summer long (233-8349)

20th Century Bowling Bowl 1 game, get 1 FREE and FREE shoe rental, Tues. & Thurs. 12-4pm (232-5530)

Parents, coaches, and activity leaders can initial a square for each hour of activity that you do. You can also get squares stamped by attending scorecard activities. Purple squares must be stamped at a "Cool Deals" activity or a "Fun Calendar" event. Mix it up and try different ways to show your VERB. When all 16 squares are filled you can turn in your card and pick up a new one at specified locations.

cool deals

* Parent waiver required

how to use your scorecard

Check out the website for details and locations on all the VERB activities happening this summer!

fun calendar

Get Your Game On with ISU Athletes
Try out a new verb with Iowa State's athletes. Get tips from experts on the Cross-Country, Volleyball, and Swimming Teams.

Thursdays May 31st – August 2nd – "Tune into Main Street" Concerts
Games with the VERB Street Team and more! Tom Evans Park, 5:30-7:30pm; Bandshell Park, 7:30-9pm

VERB Soccer Clinics with the Ames Soccer Club
Professional coaches will lead clinics on Sat. 6/23 and Sat 7/28. And host a 4 vs. 4 scrimmage on July 7th 10-12pm

Nature Hikes
Wilderness Exploration hikes in Story County parks with nature experts. See web for times and dates.

VERB Bike Rides
Come ride with the VERB street team and Skunk River Cycles. Bike checkups available.

Golf and Tennis Clinics
Learn from the experts at the Ames Country Club!

June 16 – Day for All Ages
Come play at Mary Greeley Medical Center's Day for All Ages Event. Stop by the VERB booth to try out the obstacle course and win prizes! 9am-1pm

July 4 – Ames Downtown Parade and Festival
Show off your VERB in the 4th of July Parade with the VERB Street Team! Check out the VERB booth at the after-parade festival.

July 7 – Midnight Madness Run
Come race in the Midnight Madness VERB Run just for 8-13 year-olds (~ 1 mile). It's FREE and all finishers win a prize! 6pm

June 9, July 14, August 11 – Disc Golf Free Play & Tournament
Come get a FREE disc golf frisbee and play a round with the VERB Street Team at the Carol Mary Disc Golf Course. 10-12pm

August 17 – VERB Grand Finale
Swim, slide, and play at the VERB Grand Finale Swim Party at the Fawcett Family Aquatic Center in Nevada. Last chance to turn in scorecards for the grand prize drawings! 8:30-10:30pm

Appendix C: Final VERB Survey Invitation – Sent out through email

VERB Summer Scorecard Program Parent Survey - 2007

Dear Parent or Guardian,

During the summer months, your child has been voluntarily participating in the VERB Summer Scorecard program. Because you are the designated parent or guardian of this child, we would like you to complete a survey about your child's interest and involvement in physical activity over the summer. The information will assist us in learning how to improve the VERB program and to develop effective ways to promote healthy lifestyles in families.

The results will be primarily used to evaluate the VERB Summer Scorecard program but results may be shared in correspondence with community leaders, public health officials or to facilitate future community based projects. There are no known physical or psychological risks associated with completing this survey; however, some of the questions may seem personal. Names are not used on the survey so your responses are completely confidential. Files and study records will be stored in the Health Promotion and Exercise Lab at Iowa State University and can be requested from the Principal Investigator.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no cost for participating and no specific compensation is provided. Deciding not to complete the survey will not affect your child's involvement in the VERB program. If you have any questions about the purpose of the study please contact Dr. Gregory Welk (515) 294-3583, gwelk@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact Ginny Austin Eason, IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, austingr@iastate.edu, or Diane Ament, Director, Office of Research Assurances (515) 294-3115, dament@iastate.edu.

Your active completion of the attached survey will serve to document your consent to participate in this project.

To complete the survey, click on the link below or go to
[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm= 2ftVpGvh_2bBV2BltukG0
 NoGg_3d_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=2ftVpGvh_2bBV2BltukG0NoGg_3d_3d)

We understand that many of you have multiple children in the program. Because children are all different we would appreciate it if you would fill out a survey for each child that participated in the program

Appendix D: VERB Summer Scorecard Parent Evaluation

Please answer the following questions about your family:

Child Age: _____

Child Gender: M F

Child Grade: 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Child Height: _____(ft)_____(in)

Child Weight: _____ (lbs)

Your Age: _____

Your Gender: M F

Town/Community You Live In: _____

School Your Child Attends: _____ -Check Here if Home Schooled

Zip Code of Town/Community You Live In: _____

Please flip page over to complete the rest of the survey

The Following questions ask about your child's overall involvement in physical activity and interest in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program

1. Which of these sentences best describes your child and their interest in physical activity?

- ☐ My child is very interested in physical activity and sports
- ☐ My child is somewhat interested in physical activity and sports
- ☐ My child is not interested in physical activity and sports

2. How involved are you with your child's physical activity and sports?

- ☐ Very (e.g. I coach their sports team or am active with them at home)
- ☐ Moderately (e.g. I drive them to practices)
- ☐ None (e.g. I am not involved at all)

3. How motivated was your child to participate in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program?

- ☐ My child was not very motivated to participate and did not think about filling out the card
- ☐ My child was somewhat motivated but needed a prompt to be active and fill out the card
- ☐ My child was very motivated to participate and took responsibility for filling out their card

4. Check any activities that your child participated in during the VERB Summer Scorecard Program

-Cool Deals (Please click the location of the Cool Deal you participated in)

- ☐ Lin-Mar Mini-Golf and Batting Cages
- ☐ Homewood Golf Course
- ☐ Pools in any Story County Town
- ☐ 20th Century Bowling
- ☐ ISU Rock Climbing at Lied Recreation Center
- ☐ Canoeing at Ada Hayden Park
- ☐ Cardinal Gymnastics
- ☐ Veenker Golf Course
- ☐ Ames Ice Arena
- ☐ Other _____

-Events

- ☐ VERB Soccer Clinics
- ☐ VERB Bike Ride
- ☐ ISU Athletics (Volleyball, Cross Country, Gymnastics, or Swimming)
- ☐ Disc Golf Free Play and Tournament
- ☐ Tom Evans Park Thursday Night Concerts
- ☐ Bandshell Park Thursday Night Concerts
- ☐ Swim Party at Fawcett Family Aquatic Center (August 17)
- ☐ Day for All Ages
- ☐ 4th of July Parade or Booth
- ☐ Midnight Madness Run
- ☐ Hikes in Area Parks
- ☐ Golf / Tennis Clinics at Ames Country Club

5. Did your child complete one or more scorecards?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5a. If Yes, how many Scorecards did your child complete?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 +

5b. If No, what were some reasons why it was hard to complete?

- ☐ Times and scheduling of events was not convenient
- ☐ Program was disorganized and you were unaware of any events or deals
- ☐ I did not understand how it worked
- ☐ My child was not interested in any of the events
- ☐ My child lost his card
- ☐ Other _____

6. How did you or your child first find out about the VERB Summer Scorecard Program? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ In a letter and a scorecard brought home from school
- ☐ A poster
- ☐ From a friend
- ☐ A television commercial
- ☐ Listening to the radio
- ☐ Newspaper advertisement
- ☐ Seeing the VERB booth at a local event

7. Scorecards were distributed to youth in most Story County Schools. Do you remember receiving one?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, my child received school at home (home school)

8. Ads were posted in Ames Tribune and aired on local cable television. Did you see these ads?

- ☐ I saw the Ames Tribune advertisement only
- ☐ I saw the cable television advertisement only
- ☐ I saw the advertisements in both locations
- ☐ I saw no advertisements for the VERB Summer Scorecard in either location

9. Were the VERB emails and website useful in updating you on the upcoming activities?

- ☐ I never received the emails
- ☐ I received the emails, but did not think they were useful
- ☐ Very useful and motivated me to bring my child to the events

10. Was the VERB website useful in updating you on the upcoming events?

- ☐ I used the website frequently to get updated
- ☐ I used the website a couple of times
- ☐ I never used the website

11. How would you rate your child's impression of the VERB Summer Scorecard Program?

- ☐ My child would definitely participate in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program next year if it is available
- ☐ My child might participate again in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program if it is available
- ☐ My child would not participate next year in the VERB Summer Scorecard Program if it was available

12. Was your child aware of the 'VERB' name/brand before the program?

- ☐ Yes

☐ No

13. Were you aware of the 'VERB' name/brand before the program?

☐ Yes

☐ No

14. How often are you active in physical activity and sports?

☐ Daily

☐ 4-5 Times Per Week

☐ 2-3 Times Per Week

☐ About 1 time per week

☐ Every few weeks

☐ I am not active in either

15. What improvements would you suggest for improving the program next year?

Appendix E: VERB Newspaper Advertisement

VERBTM **SUMMER SCORECARD**



**VERB Summer Scorecard is the ticket
to fun this summer for 8 to 13 year olds!**

**Register online and receive a free VERB t-shirt!
(Special Midnight Madness Run—July 7th)
www.StoryCountyVERB.org**

Appendix F: Script for VERB Radio and Television Advertisement

The VERB Summer Scorecard is your ticket to fun this summer. If you are between the ages of 8 and 13 and live in Story County, you can participate in many Fun Events and take advantage of several Cool Deals at local businesses that will get you out the door and get you active. Fun events include playing sports with ISU athletes, going on nature hikes, participating in soccer or golf clinics, and much more. Along the way, you will become eligible for lots of great prizes. To find out more, check out our website at www.storycountyverb.org.